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REÜNION:

THE REPORTS

OF THE

JOINT COMMITTEE

OF THE

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AND OF THE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE

OF THE

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REPORTS ON REÜNION.

Extract from the Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States of America, in session at Rochester, N. Y., May 22d, 1867:

The Special Committee, to whom was referred the Report of the Committee of Conference on Reünion with the other Branch of the Presbyterian Church, presented their report, which was accepted and unanimously adopted.

The Report of the Committee of Conference is as follows:

The Committee, appointed by the last General Assembly to confer with a similar Committee of the other Assembly on the desirableness and practicability of reüniting the bodies which they severally represent, would respectfully report:

That, in the discharge of the duty assigned them, the two Committees assembled in the City of New-York, Wednesday, the 20th of February, 1867, and, after organizing in their respective places of appointment, met in joint session for conference and prayer.

Their meetings continued to a late hour on Friday evening, February 22d, when the Committees adjourned to meet again, in the same city, on the first day of May.

Reässembling at that time, they continued their conferences till Tuesday the 7th of May, when they finally adjourned. The circumstances, in which the Committees held their first meeting, were so peculiar as to demand a special mention, as they were fitted to produce an unusual sobriety.

The Chairmen of both Committees as originally constituted were absent; one, the Rev. Dr. Brainerd, had been translated to that world, where all the distinctions of Christian discipleship which exist on the earth are lost in the harmony of Heaven. The other, the Rev. Dr. Krebs, was disabled by severe illness from all participation in our conferences, waiting for that change to come which will unite him to the great company of Christian Ministers in the Kingdom of God.

All the meetings of the Committees were distinguished by a degree of courtesy and unanimity, which was more than common. Composed of men of decided individuality, representing divers interests and sections, they have discussed every question, many of them of admitted delicacy and difficulty, with the utmost frankness, without one word or expression of any kind ever to be

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their Joint Committee is now submitted. The remarkable unanimity with which these initiatory proceedings have been concluded, after a thorough and frank discussion of the basis of Union, is full of encouragement; and, whatever may be the ultimate result, much has already been accomplished for the healing of our divisions, and the promotion of peace and good-will in the Presbyterian body.

Impressed with these considerations, and gratefully recognizing therein the guiding providence of God in the successive stages of this work of concord, and especially the spirit of wisdom and love given to his servants in their several conferences, we do recommend, that this Assembly approve of the whole action of its Special Committee as declared in their Report, and that the same Committee be continued for the purposes for which it was constituted.

There is a single point on which the Joint Committee ask instructions from the two General Assemblies. It relates to the changes in representation, etc., which will be required to adapt our ecclesiastical system to the necessities and circumstances of the united Church. We would recommend, that it be left to the Joint Committee to examine carefully the whole subject, and suggest such changes in the Constitution as in their wisdom they may deem requisite.

It is further recommended, that the report of the Joint Committee be published under the authority of the General Assembly, for general distribution among our ministers and churches.

It is also recommended, that the Assembly appoint the several gentlemen designated by the Joint Committee as legal advisers, and that, in case of the inability of any one of them to serve, the Committee have power to fill his place.

It is indicative, we would believe, of the temper of this Assembly, the largest during our history of thirty years since the separation, that your Committee, though representing the extremes of our territory, and even the lingering memories of the conflict which culminated in the division, are of one mind in desiring the speedy and permanent Reünion of our beloved Church. It is but reasonable to anticipate, that the same spirit will characterize the action of the other Assembly, in the recollection of the fraternal, not to say magnanimous, advances made one year ago, and which gave rise to present measures for Reunion, and the hope increasingly and fondly cherished in the great Presbyterian household. Other members of that renowned family, than those represented in the two Assemblies now in session, at home and across the sea, are stirred in sympathy at the goodly prospect. The friends of Christian Union everywhere claim an interest in the completion of our work, so happily begun, as another sign of the predicted day when all Christ's people shall be one, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

By order of the Assembly,

EDWIN F. HATFIELD, *Stated Clerk.*

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